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THE AMERICAN DUTY ON ART

PARIS, May 25.

IN view of the petition of the American artists, now before Congress, asking for the removal of the duty on works of art, several leading French and American artists in Paris have expressed their opinion on the subject to the Associated Press correspondent here.

Regarding the effect of the reduction from 30 to 15 per cent brought about by the McKinley tariff, M. Jules Breton said: "I have not remarked any difference in sales since the reduction."

M. Gérôme remarked: "I believe that the reduction has been favorable to the trade in works of art."

"I think," said M. Tony Robert-Fleury, "the sale has been certainly facilitated by this measure. It has affected not so much the masterpieces of art, which are always easily sold, as the canvases of less value."

M. Berne-Bellecour said: "I have found no difference in the sale of my pictures in the United States since the reduction of the duty, which is of absolutely no importance so far as I am concerned."

M. Debat-Ponsan's opinion was as follows: "For my own part, I cannot say that the reduction of the duty on pictures in America has modified the conditions of sale."

M. Maurice Courant remarked: "I have not noticed any appreciable change in the condition of the sale of French pictures in America since the reduction; but this may depend on circumstances quite independent of the Custom House."

M. Eugene Dauphin says: "I believe that the reduction has certainly contributed greatly to develop the trade in works of art."

"I have noticed no difference in sales before and since the reduction," said M. Pierre Jeannot.

M. Charles Delort remarked: "I do not believe the recent change has had any influence on the sale of high-priced pictures; but it has favorably affected the market for the so-called impressionist school, and in a short time America will be covered with yellow and blue pictures."

Said M. Leon L'Hermitte: "I am ignorant as to whether the lessening of the duty has any bearing on the purchase of pictures for America, but I am persuaded that the measure has been highly

appreciated in Parisian studios as a mark of courtesy on the part of Americans toward us."

M. Charles Meissonier, son of the famous artist, said: "The decrease has not affected me personally."

Herr Mesdag, the Dutch artist, said: "I do not understand why we should still pay a duty of 15 per cent. The difference between 30 and 15 per cent is not the question, but between 15 per cent and nothing. These duties are a great obstacle to sales."

Some of the better-known resident Americans were questioned. Alexander Harrison replied: "I think that the French art world, from the first, took a sentimental view of the 30 per cent tariff, looking upon it as an attack upon their amour propre, the larger-minded painters seeing that it could not materially affect their relations with the American market, and using it only as a pretext, to be applied whenever they desired it. Consequently, the reduction has been a compliment and a concession, and has pleased them."

Charles Sprague Pearce said: "The news of the reduction was received here with satisfaction."

William O. Partridge, the sculptor, said: "I have talked on the subject with Bouguereau, Alfred Stevens and others. They rejoiced at the reduction, but think the duty should be entirely abolished."

Julius L. Stewart said: "The reduction was welcomed here, but I think that no such duties should exist."

Walter Gay remarked: "The French have long since ceased to bear any enmity toward American artists because of this tax, realizing that every one of our true artists was opposed to it."

Henry Mosler said, with much warmth: "I hope Congress will have sense enough to abolish the tax altogether, and I think it a shame to America that it ever existed."

Dr. J. F. P. Hodson, of No. 19 West Thirty-ninth street, has a hobby of collecting etchings. The doctor is a short, energetic gentleman, exceedingly quick in his movements. When not busy with his patients, he takes great delight in browsing around odd places and old book stores, in the hope of finding some rare old etchings to add to his collection, which, by the way, is one of the finest in the country. Among the collection are several Rembrandt's in rare and choice states.

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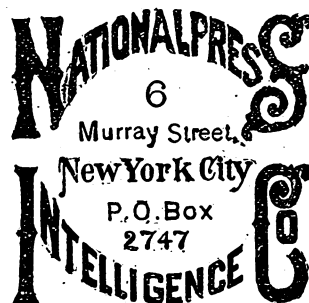
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